



## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

[Docket No. RUS-22-TELECOM-0044]

#### **60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Equipment Contract, RUS 395, for Telecommunications and Broadband Borrowers; OMB Control No.: 0572-0149**

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will be requested.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted electronically by the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and, in the “Search Field” box, labeled “Search for Rules, Proposed Rules, Notices or Supporting Documents,” enter the following docket number: (**RUS-22-TELECOM-0044**). To submit or view public comments, click the “Search” button, select the “Documents” tab, then select the following document title: (60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Broadband Grant Program; OMB Control No.: 0572–0149) from the “Search Results” and select the “Comment” button. Before inputting your comments, you may also review the “Commenter’s Checklist” (optional). Insert your comments under the “Comment” title, click “Browse” to attach files (if available). Input your email address and select “Submit Comment.”

Information on using Regulations.gov, including instructions for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site's "FAQ" link.

Other Information: Additional information about Rural Development and its programs is available on the Internet at <https://www.rd.usda.gov>.

All comments will be available for public inspection online at the Federal eRulemaking Portal (<https://www.regulations.gov>).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Robin M. Jones, Management Analyst, Rural Development Innovation Center – Regulations Management Division, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 772-1172. Email: [robin.m.jones@usda.gov](mailto:robin.m.jones@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies the following information collection that Rural Utilities Service is submitting to OMB as extension to an existing collection with Agency adjustment.

*Title:* Equipment Contract, RUS 395, for Telecommunications and Broadband Borrowers.

*OMB Control Number:* 0572-0149.

*Expiration Date of Approval:* December 31, 2022.

*Type of Request:* Extension of a currently approved information collection.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.71 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Business or other for profit, not-for-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Respondents: 28*

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: .71*

*Estimated Number of Responses: 161*

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 114 hours.*

*Abstract:* The RUS manages the Telecommunications loan program and the Rural Broadband program, to provide loans and loan guarantees to fund the cost of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment for the provision of broadband service in eligible rural communities. RUS has established the use of certain standardized forms for materials, equipment, and construction of electric and telecommunications systems. The use of standard forms, construction contracts, and procurement procedures help to assure that appropriate standards and specifications are maintained by the borrower in order to not adversely affect RUS's loan security and ensure that loan and loan guarantee funds are effectively used for the intended purpose(s). The reporting burden covered by this collection of information consist of forms to support a request for funding for equipment contracts for telecommunications and broadband borrowers.

Comments are invited on:

- (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Robin M. Jones, Rural Development Innovation Center – Regulations Management Division, at (202) 772-1172. Email: robin.m.jones@usda.gov.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

**Christopher A. McLean,**

*Acting Administrator,*

*Rural Utilities Service.*

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